WENDELL POST

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BY **JULY 15TH!**

JUNE-JULY 1990 Vol. XIII No. 1 50¢

LYDIA ELLIS

Lydia M. Andrews Robinson Ellis was born on June 18, 1900 in Vineyard Haven, Ma. Her parents were Antone Andrews and Mary Macerus Andrews, both born in the Azore Islands, Portugal.

In 1918, she married Edward Robinson, also from the island of Martha's Vineyard. Three daughters of this marriage are Peggy Murphy, presently of Orange, Ma., Charlotte Pratt, Orange, Ma., and Helen Blake Hansen of Chula Vista, California.

Lydia and Edward Robinson moved to Wendell in 1920. They first lived in "the little white house" on the Cushman lot. Four years later Edward died. Lydia and the three girls continued to live in the same house for a while. Lydia found employment as "Postal Mistress" for a few years.

In 1925 she and Glenn Ellis were married. They resided first in the "old Austin place", "old" referring to the owners of the house, not the age of the house. Later they rented the old Cogswell place on the Common. Their first son Jack (now deceased) was born while they lived at the "Parsonage".

In 1938 Glenn and Lydia bought the Chas. Ballou homestead on the common. The second son and last child was born not too long after the move. The Chas. Ballow homestead was known as the "Glenn Ellis place", then the "Jack Ellis place" and currently it is the "Don Ellis place on the common".

Lydia was an energetic person, a busy housewife and mother and a leader in the community.

Besides serving on the Wendell School Committee and as Town treasurer for 35 years she found time to enroll in Community Service courses at the state college in Amherst.

She worked for a few years at the former

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DIRECTORY INSIDE

SYLVIA WETHERBY INJURED

Sylvia Wetherby and Ginny Schimmel were on their way to visit their respective relatives in Pennsylvania when their car hit an obstructing vehicle and overturned.

First reports from Lehigh Valley Hospital in Allentown about Sylvia's condition were scary, but after six days and tests, her damaged spine was shown to be basically intactand her recovery was on its way. Ginny and the driver of the pick-up truck also involved were unhurt. Ginny states that they all had seatbelts fastened and is sure they saved their lives.

Another victim of the trauma was Meg, Ginny's dog, who ran away from the car during the confusion and was lost for six days. Following reports from a local person, Ginny's brother camped by the river near the accident sight, and the day of the Wetherby/Schimmel departure for home, Meg came up to the camper from the river, covered with mud and hundreds of ticks, but none the worse for her experience.

Susan DunLany

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REFLECTIONS ON TOWN MEETING '90

Meetings can be hard on the soul. Late nights, extended debate! Some people go to meetings instead of parties. They persevere! This might be due to a unique blend of resposibility, concern and intrigue. There is a touch of pleasure thrown in besides personal motives.

Debates can be lengthy, redundant, unfocused, rudimentary... But debates aren't always slow. They can be relevant, clarifying, revealing, persuasive, dramatic...true intellectual inquiry into the collective and efficient workings of our town.

What meetings are for is to accomplish town business. Officials work overtime to assure town members their most rational presentation. I assume Wendell meetings are very well prepared because officials have no need to convince themselves via charts, handouts and speeches and members are greeted at the door with varied documents and records to explain, to justify, to convince. There is a lot of care and respect typed into these papers.

Decision making can be serious business. Blessed be the speaker who enlivens the crowd with levity. But observe the faces. The expressions crease and deepen even as debate is compounded, as articles are divided, as years pass. How affectionately one can feel towards the familiar profile, the hunched shoulder, the intent gaze.

People seem to take their votes very seriously. They ponder the weight of their decisions. But there is room for defeat since the victors are usually our friends. The dynamic can't help

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the Wendell Post

Vol. XIII No. 1

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A Thousand Pardons to Those Omitted or MisNamed, or Misspelled, or otherwise Offended.

Photography: Joy Gorzacowski

Thanks to Sally Alley Muffin-Stuffin for the front page artwork.

***Post policy is that every article be signed. We regret author credit omissions where authorship unknown.

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Christine Heard and Eugene Witham were married May 12 in a ceremony at Christine's Depot Road home. Friends and neighbors were in attendance at the ceremony, which included a reception outdoors. Congratulations and best wishes!

IN MEMORY

May, the anniversary month of the beginning of the Wende Golden Age group, brings to mind fond s of our deceased members:

Leola	Romeo Caron
Ella Heb.	Warren Oliver
Clayton Sc. ener	Maurice Lauro
Harry Thayer	Bill Parsons
Juanita Read	Maurice Cole
Fanny Davis	Inez Lewis
Waldo Davis	William Thompson
Agnes Telling	Lydia Ellis

May they rest in peace.

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WARWICK INN ALIVE

The Warwick Inn is alive and well in Warwick. Wendellites who have visited report that it has many activities to share. Music, pool table, board games, and darts, and satellite television. Sandwiches, burritos, and nachos are part of the regular menu with a daily special thrown in here and there. Open every Thursday and Friday at 7:00p.m. and on Saturdays when a band is scheduled. Please come by!

EXERCISE/DANCE WORKSHOP WITH KUUMBA

Classes will vary from African Dance to Hiking, Stretching, Yoga and Calesthenics. Classes held at Wendell Meeting House on Fridays: Children 3:30-5:00pm
Adults 6:00-8:00pm
Classes start Friday June 15, 1990.
For more info call Kuumba 4-6910
Sponsored by Wendell Recreation Committee

VOLLEYBALL ON THE TOWN COMMON

There will be "pick-up" Volleyball on the Wendell Town Common, starting Sunday June 24 and ongoing for six weeks. The play begins 10-1:00pm for intermediate and advanced
1-2:00pm for beginners
Contact Beth Erviti 4-3250 for more info.
Sponsored by Wendell Recreation Committee

WENDELL 2nd Annual! GARDEN BIKE TOUR

Sunday August 5th

Leaving Wendell Common
10am sharp

Last year about 15 Wendell folks and friends joined together for a tour of 5 Wendell gardens, all at different stages of development. It was a day to enjoy the natural beauty around us as we biked peacefully along wooded roadways and ambled through flowering gardens. It was also a day to discuss common garden problems, share methods and ideas that left everyone feeling a little wiser. We really felt it was the kind of day worth repeating.

So, if you'd like to have your garden included on this year's tour please contact Joyce or Rosie 4-8457 by the end of July.

If biking is a problem for you please meet us anyway with your car and those who need can carpool from the common. Bring a bag lunch and we'll stop to enjoy them somewhere on route.

Rosie Heidkamp

Open Women's Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting on Thursdays from 6-7p.m. at the Wendell Meeting House. Interested women and women from other 12 step programs welcome.

MUSIC COLUMN RESPONSE

To the Wendell Post:

I am responding to the article "And the Beat Goes On" written by Karen Copeland in the April-May 1990 issue of the Wendell Post. I think it is important that your readers be presented with an accurate account of the group UMOJA ENSEMBLE which was mentioned in the article.

First of all the name was incorrectly spelled. The article did not clearly state the genesis of UMOJA ENSEMBLE. This group was conceived and established by me with the understanding and intention that women of color play the leading roles in all areas of this ensemble. At the time, when I asked white women to be part of this group as supportive allies to women of color, I shared with them my vision of UMOJA ENSEMBLE: Umoja, a Swahili word meaning "first, unity," a unity that brings us together, would consist of women of diverse cultures. It would be a space especially for women of color to share their interpretation of African music and dance. The spirit of UMOJA ENSEMBLE is not recognized when this fact goes unmentioned and when Karen writes that "a group of musical women have also formed a dance and drum show." In addition, the article seems to suggest that my group started in Wendell just like the other African music groups mentioned. That is not the case.

I am frustrated that women of color are accorded so little respect by being continually pushed into the background and by being made invisible. The way in which UMOJA ENSEMBLE was represented in the Wendell Post sadly confirms my experience of working together with white women and living in a white oriented society.

Earline Robinson
89 Townhouse Apts.,
North Amherst, MA
01002

MEN WATCH BLY TAPE

A dozen men one recent Sunday evening watched a videotape of another "Gathering of Men" -- an interview of poet Robert Bly by Bill Moyers. Among those present were several of the older men of the community, bridging a gap that Bly says contributes to the widespread crisis of identity and purpose that affects men today.

A Men's Group has been meeting for the past several months, most recently around a fire in the tipi of Mark Smallidge on Davis Turn Road. Meetings are open to all men. Call me at 544-3758 or Josn Dostis at 544-8842 for details.

Jonathan von Ranson

A TYPICAL WENDELL ROADWAY VIEW IN SUMMERTIME.

WENDELL ROADS

Many of us appreciate the Wendell road system -- for its scenic, rural qualities, and because it usually gets us where we want to go, even in the middle of winter. But spring weather is a challenge for any road, and most of us know that town roads have taken a real beating this year.

Joseph Drozdowski, a 70-odd year resident of Mormon Hollow Road, says "The roads have never been this bad. What's going on, anyway?"

Well, one thing that's going on is that the Wendell Highway Department is busily trying to fix a string of pot hoes that stretches from one end of town to the other. But some of these holes are harder to fill than others.

Some of the worst seem to be on Mormon Hollow Road, near the Diemand Egg Farm. Joe Hartjens, road Commissioner, says that these holes are caused by excess water, and truck traffic. He also says that road was bad to begin with. "When the road was first made," says Hartjens, "they used everything from old tree trunks to sand, but very little of what the road needs underneath, which is gravel. So when those big empty trucks come bouncing along, the road springs up and down and the pavement cracks. It's not the trucks' fault, the road was bad to begin with. We are going to tear up those bad sections, regravel them, and then pave them again. It's expensive, but it's the only way to deal with the real problem."

Joe says the Highway Department is waiting until the next fiscal year starts -- on July 1 -- to start work on some of these larger projects. He is hoping to get some help from the state.

In the meantime, the best solution may be to just slow down!

Dan Keller

A VIEW ON THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

At long last, after many late meetings and much agonizing, the school budget for next year is finished and approved by the town. It remains only to actually get through the year on such scanty funds. This will be hard enough if state funding comes as we anticipated, but it is likely that we will get even less than we planned from the state, and we planned for significant cuts. In that case I wonder what we should do: should we try to live with what we have, at the risk of further cutting the quality of our programs, or cutting the programs themselves, or should we report to the town the extent of the shortfall, and give the town the opportunity to consider making up the difference? The latter alternative is frightening, considering the hostility sometimes accompanying discussion of increased school spending. On the other hand, does the school committee morally have the right to make further reductions in programming without informing the town? Let's make this an informal poll. Call me (4-7243) and let me know what you think: What action should the school committee take if state funding is considerably less than anticipated?

I feel perplexed by some people in our town who hint at ways education could be accomplished without money, as a community effort. I don't know how that could be organized for 200+ children without a significant number of paid personnel, though I, too, find it a compelling idea. In fact, last year after such talk at town meeting, Carlen Rigrod, Holly Field, and I organized and publicized a discussion group on just such a topic. And when the night for the meeting came, Carlen and Holly and I sat and looked at each other and wondered where all those people with the ideas were. I spend a great deal of time thinking about education, projects I would like to do with children, alternative approaches to the structure we now have, multi-generational groupings, and so on. In the 20 years I have been thinking about education, and teaching and consulting in public schools in Massachusetts, I haven't figured out an alternative that would really work, other than home education, and that only in certain situations. What are these thoughts always mentioned in passing at town meeting? Let's get specific.

I have also been thinking a great deal lately about what it means that education is so expensive. Of course, we spend very little per pupil when compared to other towns in the Commonwealth. Still, education is expensive and growing more so all the time. I think of those of us who remember living here when times were financially easier, and the resentment many feel toward the newcomers. I think of the people on fixed incomes who watch taxes go up and up, wondering how they will make it. And I think of those who gave up careers to move to Wendell, thinking that somehow life would be simpler here, that there would be more time to be really available to their children and the land and community, only to find that mortgages are mortgages whereever you live, and the only difference in Wendell is that it's further from the jobs. Time has caught up with all of us it seems. Perhaps for some of us our fear of rising taxes is a part of a deeper feeling: life is not as we thought it would be. For others, perhaps, it is strictly a money crunch. The challenge, it seems to me, is in how we frame this information for ourselves, the words we use to describe our experience. Shall the old blame the young, the liberals blame the conservatives, the childfree blame the parents, those with valuable houses blame those with houses of less value, all of us blame the military? Shall we say something more general to ourselves like "Nobody ever said life would be fair." Or is there a more creative way of looking at this squeeze, an opportunity for growth and community and healing? I'd like to think there is, and I believe Wendell might be able to find it.

The next project the school committee faces is hiring staff. We have two positions open due to resignations, and there may be more later depending on state funding. The process works in this way: The principal and 2 or 3 school committee members screen applicants, usually in an all day series of interviews. Two to four applicants are chosen to be interviewed by the school committee. These interviews, like all school committee meetings, are open to the public. That mean means that parents, or any interested person, can meet and interview candidates and play an active role in the selection of staff. The school committee then makes a recommendation to the superintendent, who decides among the top candidates, and presents his selection to the school committee for appointment. A convoluted and cumbersome process, to say the least! Few other towns use this method of hiring, and it is sometimes tempting to streamline the process. But I feel it has value, because of the potential for community involvement in these most important of decisions.

Anyone who wants to be involved in interviewing should call a school committee member to find out when interviewing is happening.

Finally, a note of welcome to Angel Russek and Patty Clark, your new school committee members. This gives us a full complement of five members. Welcome!

Zenya Wild

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RAY AVERY DESCRIBES STATE OF SENIOR CITIZENHOOD IN WENDELL

Who are the community elders who recently received use of the sunny front room of the old Center School building? What is the state of Wendell's older population today?

I talked to Ray Avery, chairman of the Wendell Council on Aging--the official Town body, like the Conservation Commission or Library Committee, that oversees the affairs of the elderly community here. Here's some of what he told me:

There aren't more than 50 senior citizens in Wendell, making it "percentage-wise probably the youngest town in the state," he said. By contrast, Warwick, roughly the same population as Wendell, has about 200. In the Wendell Golden Agers Club there are about 15-20 active members. The Golden Agers and the Council on Aging "work together--we're the same people." The Council on Ageing presently includes Lucille Lewis, Elsie Diemand, and Elizabeth Scully. It has access to funding from the state Department of Elderly Affairs, a check which in the past has amounted to the minimum given, about $630 this year with reduced funding due to the fiscal crisis hanging over Boston. With this money they offer medical screening at Town Hall for blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes. plus a monthly newsletter.

For towns with operating senior citizen centers, there is more state money, though it's also been cut. It is given preferentially to new centers. The fate of that money hangs in the results of the currently debated tax package.

One of the activities not funded by the state, but by a $1.50 individual contribution, is a monthly ride to Greenfield to the malls on the Mohawk Trail. A bus under the jurisdiction of the Warwick Council on Aging (shared with Wendell and New Salem) comes on the third Thursday of the month and picks up Wendell seniors at their homes. They get dropped off at the mall for about two hours. On the way back to Wendell they stop for lunch. It's a combined social and shopping occasion.

Very few Wendell seniors take advantage of an offering at the Orange Senior Citizens Center--a noon meal served five days a week. To get there, transportation is provided if needed. Ray is one of the regulars of this service, though he drives himself.

The Golden Agers have always been a presence at Old Home Day, with a booth of handmade craft items. "We're an active group," Ray says. "We'll make good use of the Senior Center." One of their recent projects has been to investigate the possibility of housing for seniors in Wendell, an interest they still have, and are now looking at tying in with affordable housing programs.

Ray mentioned a survey in which

Ray Avery

Wendell elders were asked whether they'd rather be in an exclusively elderly situation, or have children around. "Their answer suprised me," he said; "they said they'd rather be with children around, even though--to me, anyway--children includes teenagers with motorcycles and loud radios!"

The reason Wendell's older citizens are so few in number is that old people feel isolated here, Ray said. When pressed, he indicated the exodus happened not just because of the lack of shopping and cultural offerings, but also because something snapped when the Town was, well, invaded in the '70s and '80s. The heavy influx of newcomers at that time wasn't just a strain to the existing culture by their numbers, but also by their age and outlook. Talking to Ray I sensed we newcomers appeared to share so few of their values that bridges between us weren't easily found. "Did you feel like you got disenfranchised?" I asked Ray. He said, "Yes, you've got the feeling exactly."

Even among the persistent older citizens who've stayed on, Ray has been one of the more active ones. He's retired from his work as a real estate broker, but he continues as a longtime member of the planning board and he was just elected to the road commission.

He's lived here all his life. Where he lives in Wendell Depot is only 300 feet from the Dexter house where he was born in 1918.

Jonathan von Ranson

Lydia Ellis cont'

White Drum Tearoom in Orange. And later at the Leavitts' Market, now Carrolls' in Orange

She was a member of Wendell Congregational Church, the Wendell Grange and Ladies Aid Society. Also she was a member of the Orange American Legion.

In 1975 Lydia was widowed again when Glenn died. She continued as Town treasurer until She was 77 years old.

In her latest years she lived at Morse Village Rd. with her son Donald.

Having lived in Wendell 69 years, one could say she practically spent her life here.

One of her great pleasures was her flower gardens which she spent many hours tending.

Lydia had a sterling reputation, a strong character and lived her whole life by a high standard of moral and ethical values. These attributes were inculcated in all areas of her life and she should be remembered for this in the context of her contribution to Wendell in her civic and community work.

H. Hansen

BALLOU KIN REMEMBERS

Mother (Mrs. Lydia Robinson and later Mrs. Ellis) and I arrived in Wendell on the train, got off at the Wendell Depot station. This was 1921 and I was 18 months old.

There was a general store at the Depot which seemed to be the focal point of quite a large settlement. We phoned for a ride to our new home with my father's sister, Etta Ballou, next to the Town Hall.

A violent thunderstorm came up and "something going on at the Hall" so we got a ride in a wagon with a Frank Kent.

My father, Edward Robinson, was in a veteran's hospital, sister Helen in Children's Hospital, Boston, ill since birth.

Until times got better Mother helped Etta with the housework on the farm- no electricity, no running water, no screens on the windows and fly paper hanging on the screen doors. There were geese in the yard, and I was not afraid of the hissing sounds - I ran with the geese.

The Commons were high in grass. On occasion I would run away, even to the pasture beyond the present Lucille Lewis place.

On the corner opposite the Library was a big general store. Uncle Frank would take me over for a "sody."

There might have been two cars in town. Most people went once a week to Orange to do their "trading" - eggs and vegetables for staples, etc.

This is as Mother told me a few years ago. Wendell must have been a serene, restful place.

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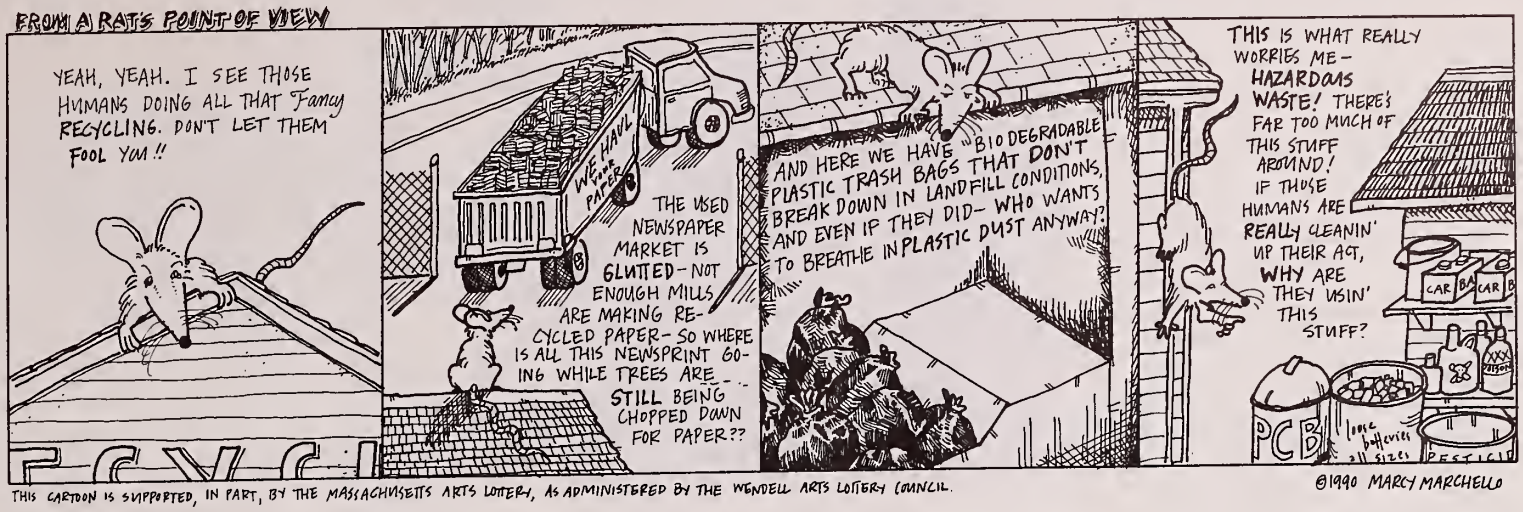

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RECYCLING - A COMPLICATED SOLUTION

Many of you have been faithfully bringing your recyclables to the WRATS and doing a commendable job of sorting, crushing and stacking assorted goods in the appropriate places for a good while now. Your individual efforts are certainly appreciated by those of us at the WRATS and by Mother Earth too, no doubt. I know from my own experience that it feels good to do the extra work to prep waste materials and channel them into some purposeful use. I also know that after I drop off the goods, I forget about them in typical "out of sight, out of mind" fashion. It wasn't until I started working at the WRATS that I began to acquire a more intimate understanding of just how complicated the solution of recycling really is.

One of the main streams of recycling in Western Mass is the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) that went on line this January in Springfield. The MRF accepts glass, cans, cardboard and paper, then sorts and markets them. Serving 700,000 people in 85 communities, the MRF is set up with the idea of making recycling as simple as possible for large scale collection. It has provided towns with roll-offs (i.e. the large green metal box at WRATS) into which people are to toss their recyclables with gleeful abandon and minimum concern for separation. MRF planners didn't seem to take into account the recycling systems already in place before leaping into the mainstream. In Wendell, we've been taking a lot of responsibility for each type of recyclable material - crushing cans and glass, bundling newspapers etc. We were recycling our newspapers and crushed glass through Day Recycling, a husband and wife enterprise of Greenfield. When the MRF came on line, Wendell decided to continue supporting the Days', while taking opportunity with the MRF to recycle cardboard, magazines and cans. Compared to other towns this has been an unusual solution - the Days consistent loss of business since the MRF's arrival shows that many towns have opted for the dump-it-all-in-one-box solution.

Another issue with the MRF is that it is a highly trucking intensive system. Each town pays the shipping expense of trucking their recyclables to Springfield. For Wendell, it costs $180 each time the roll-off goes out. For Mother Earth, its that much more fuel burned into the atmosphere, contributing to air pollution and acid rain. If the MRF box were used by Wendell as originally intended by the MRF - loaded with uncrushed glass and cans - the bulk of each shipment would be air. At least four times as much trucking is required to haul uncrushed materials. The MRF is allowing us to send crushed cans, but refuses to handle crushed glass. Even with our cardboard compartment stuffed full, we can't help but truck some air to the MRF. It is a blessing to Wendell that the Board of Health, Recycling Committee and WRATS attendents members involved in decision making have tried hard to support local business and keep costs down, while still recycling as much as possible.

The decision making process continues with current deliberations over how best to spend the $900,000 grant money allocated to Orange and Wendell to upgrade solid waste management in our two towns. The potential instability of various markets for recycled goods is making this a challenging process. Since its likely that recycling will become even more mainstream in the next few years, it follows that the recycling industries will have more post consumer material then they need. In fact, this is already the case with newsprint. Using the MRF appears to be the most secure market for the recycled goods that it accepts, since the MRF can supply industry in large quantities. Yet another challenge is plastics, soon to be entering the recycling stream, but unlikely to be accepted by the MRF since state funding is presently lacking. As these various market dynamics come into play, we hope to channel each type of material in the most environmentally and economically sound manner. Wendell and Orange are working together with Recorse Systems, Inc., an engineering and consulting firm, to determine the most flexible and effective use of the grant money, which must be spent by December. It is a short amount of time in which to decide on and impliment a long range plan. One thing is for sure - there are still more changes to come at the WRATS!

Although the MRF is the latest development in recycling, it does not offer a complete or even satisfying solution. I think ultimately, the way to resolve our modern dilemmas involves small regional systems and individual responsibility. Instead of killing off small business with Big Business Recycling, a more socially and environmentally sound solution would be to encourage local recycling enterprises. It would be

ideal to send our cleaned and sorted goods to nearby businesses that would turn them into needed products reusable in our own communities! The only limitation on such a vision should be each individuals commitment to consume less. Remember the 3 R's of Trash Reduction? Reusing food containers, bags, paper and boxes is still by far the best way to recycle them. Refusing hazardous substances, shopping bags, styrofoam, plastic wrap, and excessive packaging is a powerful way to change the market. And choosing to buy goods in bulk or with truly degradable packaging is another positive step towards reducing the economical and environmental costs of recycling. While its great to see so many of you doing your part to Recycle, I hope you are also practicing those first 2 R's as well.

Marcy Marchello
544-6184

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LETTERS

Letter to Belotti

I want you to know I had been giving consideration to voting for you in the gubernatorial election. I was not put off by the Mafia rumors, or allegations about your work as Attorney General, and I recognize your past contributions to the criminal justice system of Massachusetts.

But your own words on capital punishment have convicted you of being unsuitable to be governor. Your excessive vehemence in the aftermath of the Stuart murder was outrageously offensive, and was itself a perfect expression of a main argument against the death penalty, namely that inflamed emotions of the sort you displayed prevent rational reflection on so serious a matter as taking human life deliberately. It is infinitely worse when persons of public stature take up the cry. The only way I would vote for you now would be if you totally reversed yourself, and did it with such conviction that I could believe you.

Needless to say I will not vote for any candidate who favors capital punishment - you have merely joined a depressingly large group whose net effect on public life is to exacerbate the tensions of these reactionary, racist times. I expected more from you.

Bob Ellis

Town Offices Vote Hasty

To the Wendell Post:

The Center School articles during the third night of annual Town meeting struck me as a study in how carelessly the character of Wendell can change. I wondered whether the officials at the head table were candid about their whole vision. It also made me restless to see how docile we voters were.

We heard Selectboard member Margo Culley urge that we seize the "unique moment in history," without specifying what it was, and Tax Collector Judy Wilder describe in no uncertain terms the inconvenience of having to do business in her home. There were empty sounding excuses about why the old fire station was useless. Then I saw Wendell voters brush aside objections of rushing unduly, and the report of the Building Facilities Study Committee and accept the Selectboard's plan for temporary town offices at the Center School

Temporary Town office space: were the implications presented?

building. I voted no, along with a few others.

It was a democratic decision, and democratic decisions aren't required to follow a rational process. But they ought to be conscious, and in this one I thought Wendell lurched across a broad line from one mode of government into another, without fanfare and possibly also without fully realizing it. What shifted was the Town's basic political heart. The time when Town business was handled by somebody in their front hall in an apron disappeared, and with it a precious motivation of public service.

The vote means in the perhaps not-distant future the Town's affairs will be handled by professionals, trained in their specialty and paid purely in money and career satisfaction for their service.

If you don't immediately see what's wrong with that, ask whether it doesn't throw away a lot of love-of-Town energy that still exists. Also, think about whether there's any mechanism left, built into the system, other our own ability to say no at Town meeting, to resist rising demands on these servants in their new offices? Demands from state regulatory agencies or from Wendellites themselves?

As long as the body politic is willingto train and pay them and provide them computers and software programs, they're likely to say, "Let life get more complex; we've got 100 megabytes of random access memory available on our computer."

Perhaps this kind of change was inevi--table for Wendell. We'll never know if we don't fight it. It's the kind of change that oughtn't happen without full debate.

Part of the problem is all the cards weren't on the table that night. Wasn't it strange that tight financial conditions supposedly precipitated the request? Giving office space instead of raises the Town could not afford this year. Yet it implies great future costs--how great nobody has studied. And other financial assumption weren't proven. Selectboard member Culley told me the move "probably" won't add immediately to the overhead of Town government since repairs to the building were needed, and it "has to be heated, anyway." She agrees the move is toward professionalism, which as she knows, means salaries. But "getting somebody into the treasurer position and keeping them will save money," she said.

On the other hand, temporary offices imply permanent ones someday and "a permanent solution will be very costly," she herself said. Wendell is carrying two very large notes now. Where is the money to come from?

Confidentially, members of the selectboard and finance committee are looking to use the proceeds of the Diemand-Bennett demolition landfill to pay for the permament offices, first perhaps tearing down the old fire station and building a Town Hall annex there. In that brave goal they made a start: got the town committed to providing office space before anybody--including the study committee--could present a detailed, costed-out overall picture...or before the newest study committee, voted in that night, could report on the best use of the demo dump money.

Rather than a sense of urgency, the situation seemed to call for patience. I noticed Kathy Becker chortled when an article to give the Center School building for library and community center uses was turned down. "This is a historic moment!" She cried. "You just turned down an article!" That one, incidentally, wasn't supported by either the Library Committee or the Recreation Committee; it was an easy one to vote down. I got the feeling folks were afraid to anger Mrs. Wilder by not making the office decision until a permanent solution was available.

There are even more basic choices facing Wendell than which Town-office plan to approve. Do we ask our hard-working neighbors in Town positions to keep up with the "growing complexity of government" or ask them to find ways, with or without state approval to keep it simple? This sort of choice is never presented explicitly at Town meeting, partly, I think, because so far the "growing complexity of government" suits the natural desire for challenge, meaning and worth of these same capable, underappreciated people. For a while now I've suggested a cadre of baby-sitters and cookie-bakers for our town officials and the members of our boards and commissions--tokens of the Town's (or my) honest, ongoing appreciation for the work they do...and my hope that they'll keep it simple.

One doesn't have to participate in a sickness just because it has perfaded an entire political system--Nuremburg established that. The "growing complexity of government" is a sickness our officials are being "forced" to contract. Here I'm getting into a very unprovable area, but I think life per se doesn't get more complicated; what happens is more and more people try to get by without having to do the basic work of directly supporting their own lives. In the slippage of this increasingly specialized and alienated community, things have become jobs that used to be done with one hand while the other hand was stirring the oatmeal.

I personally would like to see this question of Town offices considered again.

Jonathan von Ranson

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THE PRESENT CO-OP BUILDING WE ALL KNOW AND LOVE AND BUMP AROUND IN TOGETHER....

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CO-OP'S BUILDING PLAN MOVES AHEAD

The Village Cooperative's plan to construct a new building has begun, including a proposal for public investment.

Under the new arrangement, members of the community as well as those associated with the cooperative are to be asked about investment of at least $1,000 each.

Estimates are that the new building will cost $100,000. Work is already under way with a local contractor drilling a well.

The overall plan calls for erecting a two story building across the street from the cooperative's current location in Moores Corners, which will provide it with 2,000 square feet of retail space. This provides more space than the existing building and should significantly improve business, organizers say.

The cooperative will lease the first floor space from the partnership for five years with an option to purchase the building outright after that.

There would also be 1,000 square feet of office space on the second floor. The rest of the second floor would be available for other uses.

The 1.16 acre parcel where the new store is to be built is owned by Daniel Bennett, who becomes the general partner in the new business enterprise.

Bennett said he is organizing the Moore's Corner Community Partners, a non-profit group, as a limited partnership. So far members include Bennett, who brings the land valued at $41,000, the cooperative, which brings $5,000 and some investors from the community.

Local residents are being asked to put up at least $1,000 each. Bennett said if the business is able to raise at least $50,000 using this method, the store will stand a better chance of surviving financially.

Money not raised through the partnership will come from taking bank loans, Bennett said.

"We organized the partnership to strengthen the coop," Bennett said."We're trying to get it to stand on its own two feet."

In November, town voters adopted an amendment to the zoning bylaws that allows the cooperative to build the new store. Under current zoning for village centers like Moore's Corner, such a use is only allowed under a special permit. Because the project has strong community support, the Planning Board agreed to use of the permit system to allow the store.

The cooperative, formerly the Shutesbury-Leverett Food Co-op, grew out of two food cooperatives that started in Amherst in the 1960s and 1970s. They are defunct but the Shutesbury-Leverett Co-op remained active, working out of the Shutesbury community Center until 1983, then moving to the LaClaire's Store in Moore's Corners.

Patrick J. Callahan

ELECTION RESULTS

255 of Wendell's residents showed up at the polls for town elections on Monday, May 7 There were 4 contested seats out of the 15 town positions residents casted their ballots for: selectperson, assessor, town clerk and planning board.

Ann Zak won the position of Selectperson by a margin of almost 2:1 over Mike Anderson and Ken Simos. She thanks people for their support and is genuinely looking forward to working with Ted and Margo.

Susan Dunlaney is now on the Board of Assessors winning by 144 votes to 94 votes over Dor Thompson.

In the closest race of all, Joe Diemand won a 5 year seat on the Planning Board by 156 to 127 votes over Georgina Kisch.

The uncontested seats were filled by those running. See Election Results at a Glance elsewhere in the Post. One position still remains on the Board of Health to be filled by appointment by the Selectboard.

There were 3 referendum questions on the ballot. The questions were a forum for residents to show their opinion on the topics of town buildings, direction of state revenues and the issue of cuts to local aid. The questions pertaining to local aid, directing 40% of state revenue from taxes and lotteries back to town's and municipalities in an unrestricted way were overwhelmingly in favor of more $$$ coming to the towns from the state's revenue.

The question pertaining to the use of the Center School was less clear cut. Each voter could choose two of the named possibilities and the results were spread fairly equally among them all with the highest percentage leaning toward a senior center. The numbers were as follows: Temporary town offices - 90, Recreation and Arts - 100, Senior Center -179, Library - 102. The final decision rests in the hands of the Selectboard.

WRITE-INS FOR TOWN OFFICES

	name & no. votes	
For Board of Health (3 yrs.)	D. Clark	1
Board of Health (4 yrs.)	Nancy Spittle	1
	Helen Boland	1
	Wm. Golding	1
	Ed Hebert	1
	Carol Diemand	1
	D. Bardsley Sr.	1
	Joseph Hicks	1
	Marcy Marchello	1
	Donald Pugh	
Moderator:	Ray Avery	1
	Harry Williston	1
Cemetary Comm.:	Minnie Bacigulupo	6
	Golosh	5
	J. Blackbird	1
	Robt. Dawson	3
	Janice Eno	3
	Dan Bacigulupo	1
	David Wilder	1
	von Ranson	1
Road Comm (2 yrs.):	Rick Wilder	1
	C. T. Smith	1
	P. Clevdland	1
Library:	G. Manning	2
Tree Warden:	von Ranson	2
	C. T. Smith	1

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OLD HOME DAYS

JJ '86

WENDELL OLD HOME DAY

As you make your summer plans keep the second weekend in July free: the 1990 Wendell Old Home Day will be held on Saturday, July 14th. You won't want to miss this year's festivities scheduled for 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. In addition to the usual all-day music, there will be plenty of activities including a carnival by the Swift River School students, great games, terrific food, and a surprise visit by Mikhail Gorbachev! (o.k., "Gorby's" not really coming but it will still be a great day)

To make this year's celebration even more successful the Old Home Day Committee needs help. You can participate to the extent you want--give a few minutes of your time or make it your life's work. New members are always welcome. If you want to help please contact one of the Old Home Day Committee members listed here:

Anne Diemand	544-6111
Bob or Helen Dawson	544-8222
Jim McRae	544-2226

A special note to Wendell's artist and crafters: This year, in addition to the usual games and booths, Old Home Day will spotlight local artist and crafters. As a community we are fortunate to have so many talented people pursuing their creative ideals. Unfortunately, the solitude that many seek as a source of inspiration leads also to isolation. If you are an artist or crafter please consider not only displaying samples of your work but performing demonstrations of the processes that produced it as well. Our goal is not merely to provide an opportunity to sell your artworks--we hope that having so many local artists engaged in sharing their experiences will produce a synergy that will lead to continued sharing of technique and inspiration when Old Home Day is just a happy memory.

THE VERSATILE MILKWEED

It has been seven years since we first walked the piece of land we now call home. My first memory of the field was of tall goldenrod and milkweed calling in the bees from all around. The place was fairly humming with the insect activity; and the fragrance of the flowers was heavenly! When it was time for the first cutting, I hesitated to let all the milkweed be shorn. Little did I realize that no matter what we could try, the milkweed was (and is) here to stay! And how grateful I have become for the presence of this delightful plant, which serves up as a variety of vegetables through the growing season.

The dusty-rose flowering milkweed grows in relatively open and dry areas. There are other milkweeds (as in the Purple Milkweed - Asclepias purpurascens) and the poisonous dogbanes which may be confused with this plant when the stalk is first growing, so it is best to harvest any milkweed from areas where you know for sure you have seen the edible milkweed, Asclepias syriaca, growing and flowering! The first part of the plant which is edible is the stalks or shoots up to about 8 inches in length. After processing in three changes of boiling water, they can be served simply with butter and taste somewhere between asparagus and green beans, a bit on the wild side. Or serve with a white or cheese sauce. Delicious! My whole family enjoys them. The reason for the three changes of water is to rid the plants of the bitter white latex which is the sap of the plant. Because of this sap, this is not a wild food to be eaten raw. All parts of the plant need to be processed in the same way, with the exception of the opened flowers. Have three pots of water (enough to cover the amount of plant part you are cooking) boiling rapidly. Place the greens, (or shoots, unopened buds, or tiny pods) into the first pan. When the water returns to a full boil, remove the plant part and place in the second pot. When that pot is boiling again, place the plant part into the third pot and let boil, reduce heat and let cook for a few minutes till tender. Serve as is or get fancy! The flower buds cook up like a wild tasting broccoli - free for the gathering! I do not have experience with the pods; it seems by the time I get to them they are really too big to eat - the fluffy down has already begun to form once the pods feel springy to the touch. It's best to get them when they are about an inch and a half long. I'll be trying again this year! My favorite part of the plant is the flowers, which not only fill the house with their warm, sweet fragrance (we float them in bowls of water through the house) but add a special flavor to a dinner of batter-fried vegies, also known as tempura.

Even when the food possibilities have ended for the season, milkweed keeps on giving. The fluff can be used to fill pillows or stuff home made soft toys. It is best to remove the seeds, but not essential if you are sure they are well dried. During World War II this fluff was collected and used to fill life preservers! The seeds contain approximately 20% oil and is being investigated as a possible source of oil from which home heating oil and gasoline could be made.

Children, young and young at heart, love to watch the fluffy, dancing fairies rise and whirl their final dance in the fall breezes. And who does not marvel at the beauty and miracle of the Monarch butterflies (and their exquisite chrysalis's) who return year after year north to the fields of milkweed, a plant which gifts us in many ways indeed. The milkweed plant has been such a part of our lives that when we adopted a new kitten - fluffy and white - it seemed only natural to call her Milkweed!

Here is a recipe to get you started enjoying this wonderful plant. Happy Harvest.

Kate Gilday

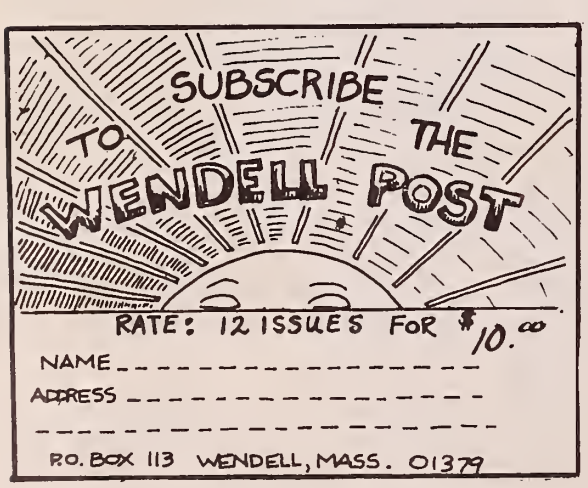
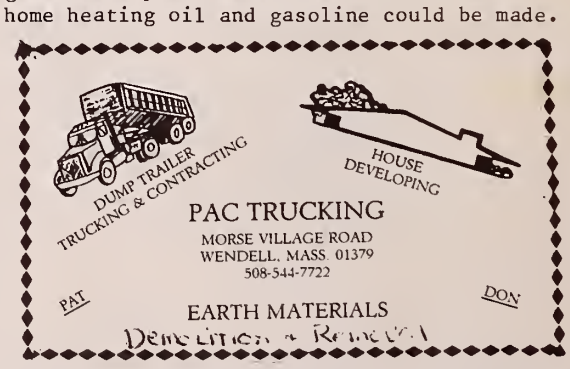
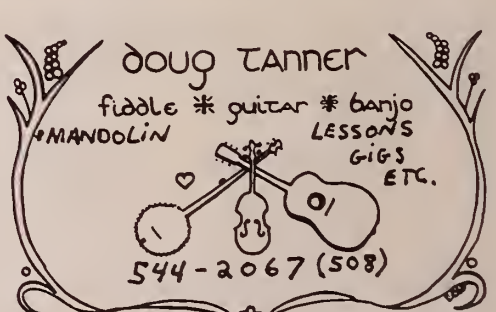
BATTER*FRIED MILKWEED FLOWERS

BATTER: (for 6 servings worth of tid-bits)

- 2½ cups flour - whole wheat pastry is very nice
- 3 egg yolks
- 2 cups cold water
- oil for frying - 3 to 4 cups

Beat the egg yolks with the water. When mixture is smooth, sift in the flour gradually stirring as you go. Stir only until the batter is combined.

The oil should be at least 325 degrees F and not more than 350 degrees F. Break the flower clusters into small pieces. Dip into the batter and carefully drop them into the hot oil. Fry until brown and puffy and rise to the surface.

Drain on paper bags and serve immediately or keep warm in a 300 degree oven - on a tray

You could have other vegies sliced or cut into small pieces and go through the same process. Summer squash, zucchini, carrots, peppers and broccoli as well as squash flowers and day lily flowers are delicious served this way. Enjoy.